

# In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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## Message from the Mayor *Tribute to Walter E. Washington*

On Saturday, November 1, we bid farewell to a great friend. I delivered a brief tribute to former DC Mayor Walter E. Washington during the funeral at the Washington National Cathedral.

When I looked at the size and diversity of the gathering, I truly felt the impact Mayor Washington had on our city. He touched so many lives in ways we can't measure. In ways we may never fully comprehend.

Inside the National Cathedral sits a magnificent bust of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It reminds me of a quote from Dr. King that reads: "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Walter Washington stood tall at times of challenge and controversy. And, he thrived in times of turmoil and tranquility. He was vibrant, passionate, tireless and at times headstrong. One thing's for certain — he always spoke his mind.

You couldn't know Walter without occasionally finding yourself on the receiving end of his wonderful sense of humor. At a very public event last year, around the time I had managed to remove myself from the ballot for my re-election, Walter offered to serve as my campaign manager. I should've had enough sense to have hired him in the first place!

The great Washington poet Paul Laurence Dunbar once mourned the death of a fellow Washingtonian, Frederick Douglass. In his memorial sonnet, Dunbar wished that Douglass had remained longer to help the nation through troubled and uncertain times.

As we mourn the passing of this great public servant, I find myself wishing that Walter was here to guide us through the challenges of a new century. As Paul Dunbar wrote, "We will miss his voice and his strong arm to give us comfort through the lonely dark."

Walter and I shared a vision for this city. I'm proud to say that we're moving closer to the realization of our vision. He made great strides in our fight for voting rights and home rule. He led by example, showing a doubtful world that an African American could indeed run a major US city. Walter laid the foundation. It is our duty to continue his work.

For many of us, Walter was a guiding light. While his political career had come to an end, his lifelong career helping the people of this city continued to the day he died. He stood by me in times of need. I will always remember his gracious and determined spirit.

Thanks to Mayor Washington, the road ahead is not so dark. He helped us light the way. With every citizen our city helps, with every job we find for someone in need, with every child we educate and every neighbor we welcome into our home, we honor Walter Washington.



## AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

# Best Buy Comes to the District

Another great store is now in the District of Columbia — and on October 24 I helped welcome it to the Tenleytown neighborhood of Washington, DC. Best Buy, located on the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Albemarle Street in Northwest, is now the largest electronics store in our city.

The District government has been trying to help find appropriate retailers for the vacant Tenleytown building since the bankrupt Hechinger hardware chain vacated the site three years ago. The building, a former Sears, Roebuck and Co. store, is designated historic.

Best Buy occupies about 45,000 square feet at street level on Wisconsin Avenue. Other retailers, including the Container Store, are expected to occupy the remaining 25,000 square feet. The developers also plan to build a parking lot and four levels of condominiums on top of the retail space. The Container Store and 208 condominiums are slated to open next year. This new transit-oriented development, with the aid of the Tenleytown Metro, will help bring shoppers and economic development to Tenleytown.

For too long, District residents have hiked out of the city to buy everything from washing machines to DVD players. With Best Buy so close at hand, we can keep commerce here in the District. Best of all, Best Buy's new District location brings 100 jobs to our city.



Mayor Williams greets some of the first shoppers at the new Best Buy in Tenleytown which just opened last month.

## Community Profile

### Gene Hughes

Ward 4 resident Gene “Thunder” Hughes, a DC Boxing Hall of Famer, has dedicated his life to giving at-risk youth in the District opportunities to succeed. A true champion of the community, Gene volunteers his time and generous heart to teach youth about God, books, and boxing. The former social worker’s philosophy is “I’m not gonna tell you, I’m gonna show you.”

A native Washingtonian, Gene grew up fighting in the streets and dealt with a drug-addicted father. A mentor channeled his energy into boxing, and Gene went on to the Olympic trials and was the first coach of the great Sugar Ray Leonard. In the aftermath of the historic 1968 riots that occurred at 14<sup>th</sup> and U Streets, NW, Gene created a nonprofit called Midtown Youth Academy (MYA). “I was tired of seeing my babies getting killed,” Gene said. “I decided it was time to regroup and say we are somebody.”

The building stands on the infamous 14<sup>th</sup> Street corridor of Shaw/Columbia Heights in Ward 1 and welcomes anyone who walks in the door. MYA operates an after-school and summer enrichment program for youth ages 6 to 18 and a boxing gym for youth and adults. Each night nearly 60 youths or young adults come to MYA to complete homework, punch bags and learn life skills. Some who walk in the door end up as World Boxing Champions, such as Lisa “Too Fierce” Foster or Toni Keese.

As the founding director, Gene volunteers seven days a week despite his 70 years of age and his struggle with bone cancer. He has received recognition for his outstanding community service before, including Washingtonian of the Year in 1989, and was featured in Robert Woodson, Sr.’s book, *The Triumphs of Joseph*. Gene is an active member of the Metropolitan Baptist Church.

Gene is the June adult winner of the Mayor’s Community Service Award, sponsored by the DC Commission on National and Community Service. If you would like to nominate a youth or adult for the monthly award, visit [www.cnscs.dc.gov](http://www.cnscs.dc.gov) for nomination information or call (202) 727-9461.



Gene Hughes



## Verizon Makes Donation to DCPS

On October 28, I participated in a celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. It was a great day for the teachers, students, and the administrators of Powell Elementary School in Northwest, where we gathered to celebrate and participate in a unique donation.

Powell was one of six schools selected from around the country to receive computer learning stations with free Internet access, courtesy of Verizon and its program called "Achieve Your Dreams...Preserve Your Heritage." I am pleased that we are now part of a great partnership with Verizon.

I have always said that so much of our city's future is about partnerships. That means partnerships between government and non-profits, partnerships between government and the private sector, and partnerships among all three.

The computer workstations will be customized for each recipient school and will include operating and bilingual educational software. During the year, students at the six schools will receive assistance in using the workstations and software from members of the Hispanic Support Organization, a group of Verizon employees who volunteer their time to help the Hispanic community.

Throughout the "Achieve Your Dreams...Preserve Your Heritage" program, Verizon will honor the example of Eduardo Genao, an education official in New York City. Mr. Genao, who worked at two jobs while attending college and graduate school for 12 years, earned a master's degree and now specializes in school administration and supervision. Mr. Genao is truly an example for all.

At the event, I also acknowledged several others who were present, including Joseph Askew, director of Verizon Washington, DC; Lucia Vega, principal of Powell Elementary School; Gustavo Velasquez, director of the Office on Latino Affairs; DC Public Schools Superintendent Paul Vance; and Miss USA 2003, Susie Castillo. Their efforts to further education in the District are greatly appreciated.

## 13th Annual Make a Difference Day

There's nothing like volunteering in our community to make us realize that we're making a difference. On October 25, I helped welcome a group of more than 300 volunteers for a day of service on the Kingman and Heritage Islands for "Make a Difference Day."

A majority of the volunteers were AmeriCorps members from Earth Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps/National Civilian Community Corps. Volunteers spent the day removing invasive species and trash from the beautiful islands. At the event, there was also an environmental education camp for children led by AmeriCorps/National Civilian Community Corps members.

Make a Difference Day is a major service day supported by the District's Commission on National and Community Service. This very special day is a national day of service — a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. Created by *USA WEEKEND* magazine, Make A Difference Day is an annual event that takes place on the fourth Saturday of each October. It is also sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation. In 2002 alone, more than 3 million volunteers participated in Make a Difference Day.

It was great to roll up our sleeves and help clean up the Kingman and Heritage Islands. I was pleased to be there in part to thank all of the volunteers for taking their time to make a real difference in the District of Columbia. They joined millions across the United States lending a helping hand on Make a Difference Day.

At the end of my remarks at the event, we observed a moment of silence for a former AmeriCorps member, Diamond Teague, who died in October. He served for the last year helping improve the natural environment on these Islands and in the Anacostia watershed through Earth Conservation Corps.



## Ribbon Cutting for Overlook Condominiums

On October 25, I joined residents and community members in Anacostia to celebrate the completion of the Overlook Condominiums at Washington View. The Overlook Condominiums are an exciting \$8 million redevelopment of formerly vacant apartment buildings in the Hillside neighborhood of Anacostia. This mixed income development combines luxurious living with affordability, and some of the best views in the District of Columbia. At the event, I joined other officials to welcome the new development to the neighborhood.

Overlook is a great example of how a team of organizations can work toward a common goal. Douglass Road, LLC, a partnership between the Banc of America Community Development Corporation and the Washington View Tenants Organization, redeveloped 109 vacant apartments into 77 large condominiums with spectacular views of our city's booming downtown.

The condominiums range in size from 900 to 1,300 square feet and in price from \$92,000 to \$136,000. Our Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) provided a HOME grant of \$350,000 for second mortgages for qualified buyers to enhance affordability. Overlook Condominiums is the third redevelopment project that Banc of America CDC has undertaken in the Hillside neighborhood (Townes at Hillside and Washington View Apartments are the others), an investment totaling more than \$25 million.

The Overlook condominium development is significant for several important reasons:

- It has attracted middle class residents back into a neighborhood that once suffered from some of the highest crime rates, lowest incomes and greatest vacancy rates in the city. The young, middle-income buyer who is the typical homeowner at Overlook brings much needed disposable income and tax revenue to this neighborhood and city.
- Many of the Overlook homeowners are new city residents, helping achieve my goal of bringing 100,000 new residents to our city.
- Overlook Condominiums fulfill one more objective of the community redevelopment master plan that was formulated by the Hillside Collaborative more than seven years ago.

Since taking office, I've listened to residents and made housing a priority. I've focused on increasing affordable housing, rehabilitating aging rental housing and eliminating vacant and abandoned properties throughout the city.

## Citizen Summit III Reminder

Two weeks ago, I announced that this year's Citizen Summit has been rescheduled for Saturday, November 15. The decision to change the date of the summit was made in recognition that citizens desired to attend funeral services for the late Mayor Walter E. Washington.

I know that many people throughout the city had planned to attend the summit this year. Hopefully, they can attend on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

This year's summit will be held at the new Washington Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A, 801 Mt. Vernon Place, NW from 8:30 am to 4 pm. The summit will give citizens an opportunity to help shape the policies of the District government on health care, crime, education, housing, economic priorities and neighborhood enhancement.

For more information, and to register, please call (202) 727-0882 or visit [www.citizensummit.dc.gov](http://www.citizensummit.dc.gov).

## Unified Communications Center Town Hall Meeting

A Town Hall Meeting is planned for Thursday, November 13, 2003 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm at the Chapel on the St. Elizabeths Hospital East Campus, 2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE. The focus of the meeting is the Unified Communications Center (UCC) facility, which will consolidate the District's emergency and non-emergency public safety call centers (911, 311, and 727-1000). The meeting, which is being planned in conjunction with ANCs 8A, 8B and 8C, will include updates on the development and construction of the UCC and an open forum following the presentations. For additional information, please contact the UCC Community Outreach Office at (202) 645-9333.





## Mayor's Week in Review

### Mayor Attends Housing Expo

**On October 25**, I attended and delivered remarks at city living, dc style – a successful expo about housing held at the Washington Convention Center.

### Mayor Delivers Remarks at Housing Event

**On October 25**, I attended and delivered remarks at the grand opening of the Overlook Condominiums in the Hillside neighborhood of Anacostia.

### Mayor Attends Vessel Christening

**On October 27**, I gave brief remarks to show support for the new Spirit of Washington II, a tour ship docked in Southwest.

### Mayor Travels to Chicago for Super Bowl Presentation

**On October 30**, I delivered remarks at a presentation supporting hosting the National Football League's Super Bowl in the region in 2008.

### Mayor Speaks at Walter Washington's Funeral

**On November 1**, I attended and delivered a tribute at the funeral of the District's first Mayor, Walter Edward Washington.

## District Activities



A District fire truck bore the body of Mayor Walter E. Washington through the District on the way to his burial at Lincoln Memorial Cemetery.



Mayor Williams and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton help to christen the Spirit of Washington II.



Mayor Williams accepts a check for \$1 million from US Department of Labor Secretary Elaine Chao to create 77 temporary jobs to assist in the continued clean-up from Hurricane Isabel.



Mayor Williams helps to cut the ribbon at Overlook Condominiums in Ward 8.



# Community News

- [Mayor Williams Supports Howard University Proposal for New Hospital Facility](#)
- [Senate Committee Approves District's Budget Autonomy Legislation](#)

[View all News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

11/13	<b>Unified Communications Center Town Hall Meeting</b> 6:30 am - 8:30 pm St. Elizabeth Hospital East Campus 2700 MLK Avenue, SE
11/15	<b>Citizen Summit III</b> 8:30 am - 4 pm 801 Mt. Vernon Place, NW Washington Convention Center Exhibit Hall A <a href="http://www.citizensummit.dc.gov">www.citizensummit.dc.gov</a>
11/20	<b>Fall Energy Expo &amp; Consumer Choice Workshop</b> 10 am - 2 pm Model Cities Senior Wellness Center 1901 Evarts Street, NE
11/25	<b>Project Harvest</b> 6 am - 6 pm Pennsylvania Avenue, NW between 11th and 12th Streets For more information, call (202) 806-3500



[View the Mayor's daily schedule](#)